

**Testimony of Common Cause Rhode Island on H 5708—An Act Relating to Elections—
Registration of Voters****Position: Support**

Common Cause Rhode Island supports H 5276 which would require the Department of Environmental Management to implement a process for automatic voter registration (AVR) for eligible individuals seeking a hunting or fishing license or renewing such a license. Expanding AVR to the Department of Environmental Management would bring additional voters into our democracy and make our voter rolls cleaner.

In 2017 Common Cause Rhode Island was a strong supporter of legislation that made our state the 7th in the nation to adopt automatic voter registration. One of the features of that legislation we fought for is found in § 17-9.1-7(i)(1) which allows non-DMV state agencies to participate in AVR should the Secretary of State approve. We believe that H 5276 may be unnecessary for that reason. While no additional state agencies have been added since the DMV system went live, we believe nothing would prevent the Secretary of State from working with the Department of Environmental management to expand AVR.

Nonetheless, we support H 5276.